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The Wise Men and the Star

"One glorious Star guided the Eastern Magi from afar."

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THE STAR AND THE MAGI

By CLARISSA A. BEESLEY

SECOND COUNSELLOR IN THE Y. W. M. I. A. GENERAL PRESIDENCY

"WHEN Christ was born in Bethlehem
 'Twas night but seemed the noon of day,
 The stars whose light was pure and bright
 Shone with unwav'ring ray
 But one, one glorious star
 Guided the Eastern Magi from afar."

—LONGFELLOW.



Arrival of the Shepherds

AS the sweet story of that first Christmas is told and told again with each recurring year, we recall with the vivid imagination of little children, the scenes of the Nativity. Almost as if we had been there we see again the Babe and His mother, the inn with its lowly manger, the patient beasts, the shepherds in whose ears had just been ringing the strains of the angelic choir and the wise men who came from afar to worship the new born King.

In the account of the "wise men" or Magi, we are particularly interested. It is given briefly and simply by Matthew :

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa : for thus it is written by the prophet :

And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not least among the princes of Juda : for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

And he sent them to Bethlehem ; and said, Go and search diligently for the young child : and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

When they had heard the king, they departed : and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child..

with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

Since so few details are available, naturally many questions arise in regard to this narrative. Who were these "wise men" and whence came they? Were they three in number or more? What were their names?

Why were they so interested in the little Child who had come into the world? All of these queries are shrouded more or less in conjecture. Evidently these men were of sufficient standing in wisdom and learning to attract the attention of Herod and to cause him to become troubled and to consult his chief priests and scribes as to the import of their visit.

According to Madam Lydia Mountford, who was a native of Palestine and who travelled and lectured extensively some years ago, the wise men were priests from Persia, Magian Princes of the great Magian order. They were "students of the stars"—devout men who, it was believed by the orientals, kept very close to God. He is known to them as the Shepherd of the Stars.

Another writer, Deems, says that the Magi were "men to whom had been entrusted sacred books; they were leaders in religion—students of astronomy."

There was doubtless a close connection between the two countries, Palestine and Persia. In the days of Cyrus and Darius their destinies were interwoven. The Persians were more friendly to the Israelites than had been either the Assyrians or Babylonians by whom they had been taken into captivity, and after Persia in turn had conquered both Assyria and Babylon, the Jews were permitted to return to their native Palestine and rebuild Jerusalem.

In Isaiah 44: 28 we read concerning Cyrus: "He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundations shall be laid."

The learned men of this Magian order in Persia were therefore no doubt familiar with the prophecies of the Hebrew scriptures concerning Messiah, and when the new star arose it appears that they realized the significance in heralding the new born King.

To show their reverence and homage they brought Him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. It is believed that these gifts symbolized three distinct classes of people: gold—the



Picture by Henri Le Rollé

royalty of the earth; frankincense—the priestly orders or the religious factions; myrrh—men of science and knowledge. All of these were united in worship of the Messiah for whose coming the world had so long waited.

The tradition of the wise men has been used by Van Dyke in two of his lovely stories—*The Sad Shepherd* and *The Other Wise Man*, and it forms the motif and background for Lew Wallace's great religious novel, *Ben Hur*.

The Wise Men

ONE Christmas story which never grows old is that of the three wise men who journeyed to Bethlehem on that wondrous night nearly two thousand years ago to visit the Christ Child. Sister Beesley, who is second counsellor in the general presidency of the Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association, retells in a novel and interesting manner this ever-new tale.

On the cover of this Christmas number of the *Millennial Star* is the reproduction of a famous painting, "The Wise Men and the Star." Legend has it that as the wise men approached the City of Bethlehem to which they were directed by the heavenly symbol, the lights of the city of Jerusalem became visible. The men argued among themselves that the new King must be born in the City of the King; therefore, Jerusalem should be their destination. They turned in that direction, only to find that their worldly wisdom had led them astray. Then they turned once again towards Bethlehem, where the star pointed the way.

In the opening chapters of this work, the author represents the Wise Men as three in number—Gaspar of Greece, Melchior of India, and Balthasar of Egypt. Each in his own country had been earnestly seeking the truth and a way of life acceptable to God and to each had come spiritual peace. To all had been given the vision of the wondrous star which had suddenly arisen in the heavens, and following its ray they had guided their faithful camels to the meeting place on the lonely, silent desert. After a brief period of rest and refreshment and each had told his story, marveling at the Divine Spirit which had brought them together, they again mounted their beasts and turned their faces toward the west. Dramatically the author thus describes the beginning of their journey:

"The camels swung forward in steady trot, keeping the line and the intervals so exactly that those following seemed to tread in the tracks of the leader. The riders spoke not once. By-and-by the moon came up. And as the three tall white figures sped, with soundless tread, through the opalescent light, they appeared like spectres flying from hateful shadows.

Suddenly, in the air before them, not farther up than a low hill-top, flared a lambent flame; as they looked at it, the apparition contracted into a focus of dazzling lustre. Their hearts beat fast; their souls thrilled; and they shouted as with one voice, "The Star; the Star! God is with us!"

But this picture, beautiful as it is, like much else which has been written, has little or no foundation in fact. There is no reliable secular account of these travellers from the east. Astronomers have endeavoured to identify the star but have found no scientific evidence of its appearance.

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LEG O' NOTHIN' WITH NO TURNIPS*

By Ramona W. Cannon

BLISS! Happiness, complete and perfect! Hannah and John were married and in their own home, set in the midst of an orchard.

When Hannah, as a little girl in a new white frock and blue sash, had recited "The Drunkard's Child" at Snow Academy, a young boy had watched her as she gave the long selection without missing a word or gesture—turning her dark brown eyes to heaven and pleading with her hands as she concluded:



The Virgin River

"Dangerous with countless quicksands, it had to be forded thirty-four times."

Amongst millions of earth
not one friend can I claim,
To wipe off my tears or to
call me by name.
On my cold bed of straw I
will lie down and die,
And my prison-filled soul
will ascend upon high,
When Jesus in accents of
mercy so mild
Will comfort forever the
poor drunkard's child.

The lad had been too shy to speak to her, but from that moment she became a vision who haunted his days as he drove his ox-team to

the canyon and sweated chopping down trees and loading them into his wagon. Hannah had once seen him after such a day, driving his team through the hot city streets. "You can't tell him from the dust he is covered with," she had confided to her sister. Upon acquaintance John proved to be a "nice, quiet boy" who gave her own lively imagination plenty of opportunity for expression. "We didn't know it was love," she said afterwards, "but of course it was." When they did know it was love, while Hannah was seventeen, they became engaged and Hannah began making a home. She picked and carded with a fine wire hand-card, fluffy bats of wool for quilts. She knitted and crocheted, and tatted. But, unexpectedly, John was called on a mission to England where he remained for three years.

At last he returned to Salt Lake City and they were married. The dream home was a reality, a two-room adobe cottage with windows opening out like doors, in French style. All the furniture had been made by the family, and with her calico curtains and bright rag carpet made by herself, and her lovely wedding presents, including a set of dishes, rare for those days, she felt like "the biggest woman in town."

*This true story was related to the writer by Sister Hannah Sharp when the latter was 81 years of age.

All the joys of housewifery were hers. Her fingers were agile at threading wicks through candle-moulds, and tying large enough knots at the bottom to allow no tallow to drip through. The candles she made of beef suet and mutton tallow. She was proud of her uniformly white soap, watching the fat lest it get too brown, straining the boiled soap to make it nice and clean, moistening the wooden tub before pouring in the mixture, so that it would not stick. She glowed with pride as she cut the cooling mass into bars and finished drying them on a plank in the sun. Plums, peaches, beans, corn, and herbs she dried for winter, and filled large crocks with preserves and jam made of her orchard-fruits and molasses extracted from home-grown sugar cane.

Best of all, the young wife was busy with tiny garments trimmed with her own hand-made lace—garments which, smoothed into the proper form, would fall gracefully from her knees to the floor as her little son or daughter slept upon her lap in church.

HANNAH SHARP could not quite credit it when the midwife told her sorrowfully that the new life had gone back into Eternity whence it had come but a few hours since.

Hannah lay weak and dazed and hopeless in her bed, showing little improvement. On the ninth day the Bishop came and finding John absent, informed his wife that the pair of them had been called by President Brigham Young to go on a mission to Dixie to help settle the "Muddy" River country, in Southern Nevada. Hannah fainted. It was no use telling her that two of President Young's daughters, and other fine people were answering the call and would be in the company. It was no comfort to be told that only the brave and the capable were summoned to such responsibilities. To leave the home of her dreams, the fresh-smelling creeks, the healthy blossoming young trees of her orchard, and the grave of her little baby whom she cherished as if yet in life, knowing that forever and forever the child was hers! To exchange this for the "Muddy," 400 miles away in a blistering alkali desert! She was not brave and capable enough for that.

Yet when the company of three score families left a few weeks later, John Sharp helped his wife to step on the hub of the wheel, and to mount the high spring seat of the covered wagon. Taking the lines, he drove away for a month's trek through desolate country. Hannah turned and from under the fan-like frill of her "shaker" bonnet gravely watched her family waving her good-bye as long as they were in sight.

Creak! creak! creak! Over the dusty roads. Around the bare mountains of late November! The silent, thoughtful husband would fluff the pillows at his wife's back and anxiously watch her pale face with its dark-ringed eyes. He knew of the weariness of her head, of her aching back and tired limbs, from the day-long jolting and the nights of sleeping in the wagon-box.

Wind and storms, inadequate food, fear of hostile Indians—these were their portion. Yet there came an evening when, in the hush of twilight as the young couple sat on the wagon-tongue, John said, "Hannah, can't you sing to me?" and Hannah found that she could.

(Continued on page 814)

"MAYFAIR WELCOMES APOSTLE OF MORMONS"

PRESIDENT RICHARD R. LYMAN and Sister Amy Brown Lyman were guests of honour at a fashionable Mayfair reception Tuesday, December 8 given by Mr. William Goodair at his home in Seymour Street, London. Approximately 200 guests called during the evening, among them many of London's prominent social leaders.

The host, Mr. Goodair, is an influential London insurance executive and has been a warm friend of Latter-day Saints for many years. On other occasions he has entertained Mission officials and elders.

Staff members of London dailies were in attendance at the reception. The *Daily Express* reporter wrote the following morning, under the two-column heading: "Mayfair Welcomes Apostle of Mormons":

Dr. Richard R. Lyman, newly appointed European Mission president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints stood in a Mayfair drawing room last night surrounded by English actors, actresses, a Mayfair host, members and missionaries of the Mormon Church. Dr. Lyman, guest of honour, neither smoked nor drank.

In civilian life this tall, burly grey-haired man is an engineer. In the Mormon Church he is one of its Twelve Apostles.

Guests at the reception were interested in the fact that none of the Latter-day Saints present smoked or drank.

Some of the guests who attended the reception are:

Mary Countess of Clancarty.
 Lady Alma Le Poer Trench.
 The Honourable Brinsley Le Poer Trench.
 The Honourable Power Le Poer Trench.
 Lady John Kennedy.
 The Honourable Mrs. Horsley Carr.
 Lady (Duncan) Campbell and Miss Jean Campbell.
 Lady Pitcairn Campbell.
 Lady Burton and her sister, Miss Maccconnell.
 Admiral Taylor, M.P., and Mrs. and The Misses Taylor.
 Major and Mrs. Davidson-Houston.
 Mrs. Mosseockle.
 Mrs. Eveleigh Nash.
 Mr. E. Boulenger, Director of The Aquarium, Zoological Gardens, London.
 Mr. W. R. H. Trowbridge, author of "The Life of Queen Alexandra" and other historical books.
 Miss Oliver Lethbridge, whose novels on African life are well known.
 Miss Iris Brooke (Mrs. Patrick Mac-

dowell), whose illustrated books on period costumes through the ages showing how fashions changed are widely read in artistic circles.
 Mr. Randall-Wells, the well-known architect, and Mrs. and Miss Randall-Wells.
 Mr. Wamsley Lewis, A.R.I.B.A., whose drawings for model country cottages were exhibited in last year's Royal Academy.
 Mrs. Flora Lion, portrait painter.
 Mrs. Kate Wilcox, the water-colour artist.
 Mr. Nigel Watson of the Military Intelligence Section of the War Office, and Mrs. Watson.
 Captain and Mrs. Dudley Foster.
 Mrs. Alan Balfour.
 Mr. Oswald, for many years the Coroner for West London, and Mrs. Oswald.
 Monsieur Nicolas Smirnoff, the Society Photographer, and Madam Smirnoff.
 Col. Stephen Simpson, D. L. for Lancaster.

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1936

EDITORIAL

BIRTHDAY OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE

“AND there were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them and said, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy. Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” (Luke 2: 8-14.)



President Lyman

Christmas! This day commemorates the birth of the babe of Bethlehem, the most important event of all human history.

All the world, every human being has reason to reflect and rejoice at this sacred season because of His coming. He brought glad tidings, great joy and the message of peace and good will toward men.

After all these years, however, how many of us are keeping in mind the glory and the meaning of His divine message? How many are living in accord and in harmony with His glorious teachings? How many are willing to work for His ideals?

When we speak of peace in these days of grave international anxiety we very naturally think of a condition in which there is no warfare between nations, and while this is perhaps the most important question confronting the world today, let us, for a moment, think also of the personal peace which comes from right living and right thinking; let us think of peace and good will in the home and family; of that joy, of that love, of that confidence and affection which should exist for one another in the hearts of those who make up the household. Let us think, too, of peace and unity and unselfishness in the Church, in the community and within the nation. Let us struggle for joy and confidence, for happiness and helpfulness, for understanding among men. Let us, at this Christmas time pray that those things may not come into our lives which are

Mean and craven,
Revengeful, sullen, slow
Which hurt the man that holds them
Much more than they hurt his foe.

And with it all let us not forget to go upon our knees around our own hearthstones and pray for peace to come into our hearts and homes, into the hearts of our fellowmen, and into our communities; let us all who have faith in Almighty God send at this Christmas time a united appeal to the throne of grace that by the power of God there may come to all nations, also, that peace on earth, good will toward men. He came to bring and for which we now pray. Such personal efforts will not be lost. They will be important factors in determining the final peace of the world.

It is nearly two thousand years since He came proclaiming peace on earth, and yet at this very hour we hear the sound of the drums of war in many nations. Five thousand pounds it cost for each and every human life, each and every one of the seventeen million that were lost in the last great war! Seventeen million! The glory, the pride, the joy, the flower of the manhood of the world! and all sacrificed for what? Nothing! It is said that in the next world war the price of £5,000 per man will look small, and the loss of seventeen million lives will be but a beginning.

Let us, therefore pray for strength to be able to help solidify and unify that desire, which burns in the hearts of most people everywhere, to do whatever is demanded in order to avoid war. Intelligent, careful and



Sister Lyman

united effort can, and must be made against such costly slaughter.

The prayer of the righteous availeth much. May men enough at this Christmas time, join with the mothers of men in every land, in appeals for that time to come quickly when nation shall not make war against nation. May the united appeal of all who have faith in the Prince of Peace, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, ascend to the throne of grace with faith enough to bring to earth enough of the Christian spirit to show the statesmen of all nations, the legislators and those at the head of the army that war settles no difficulties, that fighting and bloodshed are the business of beasts and not of civilized men in a world where the voice of the host of heaven has been heard to shout "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace."

And finally, at this Christmas time, as a result of the united and heartfelt appeals made to Divine Providence, may there come into every land, and into every clime, peace on earth, good will to men; and into all human hearts, in all countries and everywhere, may there come, we pray humbly, that "Peace of God which passeth all understanding."

RICHARD R. LYMAN
AMY BROWN LYMAN

THE STAR IN THE WESTERN SKY

By Elder A. Z. Richards, Jr.

A STAR—brilliant in the eastern sky
Fulfilled a promise from on high,
While westward, shining o'er the sea,
The same fulfilled a prophecy.

MUCH has been written concerning the visit of the wise men and the shepherds who sought and found the infant Christ, but beyond its guiding them to Bethlehem, the world knows little of the effect which that bright star had on other people at that eventful time. Its appearance in the eastern sky assured

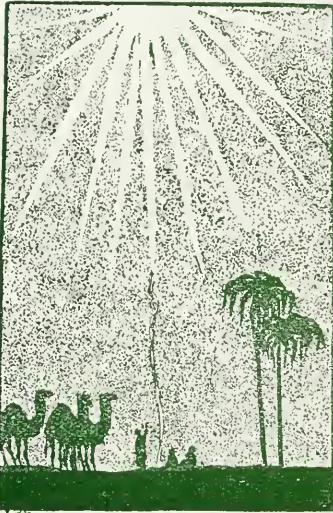
the magi that the King of kings was born, and Bible interpreters associate it with the prophecy of Balaam, who, though not an Israelite, blessed Israel many years before. He said that "there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel." (Numbers 24: 17.)

Today we depict the peace on earth and good will toward men which was heralded by the fulfillment of this prophecy. We can see the shepherds gazing at the mystery in the sky as they tend their flocks upon the Judean hills. We can feel the hush of the starlight on the desert and hear the sounds from the crowded streets in Bethlehem. We think of the peace and sacred beauty which filled the manger where the Christ Child lay.

The Scriptures tell us of the east, the Holy Land, and indicate that but few saw the signs on that unusual night. But things were

different in the west. Throughout that land, now known to us as the American continent, everyone saw the star. To them it shone as an incandescent flame in the western sky, and all the people, both sinners and saints, understood its meaning. Those who had rejected God and His servants quaked with trembling fear as they observed the signs, and in terror sank to the earth as if dead. While peace abounded in the east, confusion overturned the western world.

These people were the descendants of Lehi, who under divine guidance left Jerusalem with his family about 600 years B. C. and crossed the mighty deep to populate a new land. Lehi was a descendant of Joseph through Manasseh, and the Lord commanded him to take many of the old Jewish records with him, which he did. Thus was the old Mosaic law preserved by these people and the Lord gave them many prophets through whom He made



The Star in the East

It was seen in the West by Lehi's descendants.

known His will. Dissension set in among Lehi's posterity and two factions arose which called themselves Nephites and Lamanites after the two sons of Lehi. Both became great peoples, the history of whom is made known to the world today by their record, the Book of Mormon.

Six years prior to Christ's birth found the Nephites, deep in iniquity, casting out, stoning, and slaying the servants of God, while they encouraged and exalted false teachers who flattered them by singing in their ears the siren's song of "all is well." They revelled in luxury and the fatness of the land, but their hearts did not turn in thankfulness to the great Giver of all these bounties. Nephi, their prophet and a descendant of the first Prophet Nephi, strove to stem the tide of vice, but without avail. On the other hand, at this time the Lamanites, their enemy, were zealous in keeping the commandments of the Lord according to the law of Moses and the prophets.

ZARAHÉMLA, the great Nephite city, was visited by a stranger who preached repentance in their midst. He was Samuel, the Lamanite. We read in the Book of Mormon that in their anger he was cast from the city. Disheartened, he prepared to turn to his people, but an angel informed him that his mission was yet unfinished, commanding him to turn back and proclaim to the Nephites that which should be revealed unto him. He complied with the angel's command, only to be refused entrance at the great city gates. But with the word of the Lord burning within him he scaled the city wall and from its top proclaimed, with outstretched arms, forthcoming destruction upon its wicked inhabitants. Deadly arrows were shot at him as he stood on that high vantage point. Angry mobs hurled stones at him. But with the protection of the Holy Spirit he remained untouched. Angered, they called upon their captains to seize and bind him, but he fled in safety. Many marvelled at the power which kept him from death and some sought out their prophet Nephi, confessed their sins and became converted. As for Samuel, the people of Zarahemla heard of him no more.

The prophecies of Samuel are among the most wonderful recorded in holy writ. He foretold many things regarding the life and death of our Saviour and concerning the future destiny of the people. Among other things he said :

Behold, I give unto you a sign : for five years more cometh, and behold, then cometh the son of God to redeem all those who shall believe on his name.

And behold, this will I give unto you for a sign at the time of his coming ; for behold, there shall be great lights in heaven, insomuch that in the night before he cometh there shall be no darkness, insomuch that it shall appear unto man as if it was day.

Therefore, there shall be one day and a night and a day, as if it were one day and there were no night ; and this shall be unto you for a sign : for ye shall know of the rising of the sun and also of its setting ; therefore they shall know of a surety that there shall be two days and a night : nevertheless the night shall not be darkened ; and it shall be the night before he is born.

And behold, there shall a new star arise, such an one as ye never have beheld ; and this also shall be a sign unto you.

And behold this is not all, there shall be many signs and wonders in heaven.

And it shall come to pass that ye shall all be amazed, and wonder, in-
somuch that ye shall fall to the earth.

And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall believe on the Son of
God, the same shall have everlasting life. (Helaman 14: 2-8.)

As the five-year period drew near its end, the faithful grew more steadfast, but the unbelievers more violent until the last day dawned. Not content with mocking and reviling, the wicked leaders set aside the day when all who believed in the coming of the Redeemer should be put to death. Nephi cried unto the Lord in anguish of soul to deliver his people, "and behold, the voice of the Lord came unto him, saying: Lift up your head and be of good cheer; for behold, the time is at hand, and on this night shall the sign be given, and on the morrow come I into the world, to shew unto the world that I will fulfill all that which I have caused to be spoken by the mouth of my holy prophets. And behold, the time is at hand, and this night shall the sign be given." (3 Nephi 1: 12-14.)

Fulfilled that night, when the sun had set in its usual course, were the words of the prophet for there came no darkness, and on the morrow the sun rose on a land still light. A day and a night and another day had been as long as one day. Above the western horizon had shown the unusual star, the same which guided the magi eastward toward Bethlehem.

Seizing the opportunity afforded by the phenomenal signs, and the fear that had fallen upon the people, the righteous preached Christ unto the people—Christ the universal Saviour—Christ the Redeemer of Lehi's descendants, as well as those of Judah.

In the wake of these signs, they reaped a bounteous harvest, made ripe by the birth of Jesus, and the scripture says, "the more part of the people did believe, and were converted unto the Lord." They knew not only that Christ was born across the sea, but that He would visit them after His resurrection, for that had been revealed unto them by the prophets.

Thus, unknown to them in Palestine, a nation was converted at His birth. The tale of the conversion of these people of the Western continent to the Gospel is indeed thrilling. Equally thrilling is the story of His ministry in the Western world. Jesus spent three glorious days among those people following His ministry, crucifixion and resurrection on the Eastern hemisphere. All of these wondrous truths have been revealed in these latter days in the Book of Mormon which stands as a new witness for Jesus the Christ.

THE STAR AND THE MAGI

(Concluded from page 804)

That such a star did appear, however, and that it guided the learned men to the manger there can be no doubt. The authentic record is left to us in the New Testament; let us read it again each Christmas and while we vision the Nativity in picture, song or story, or dwell reverently upon it in contemplation, may we not conclude that the Magi were divinely directed to become witnesses with many others of the birth of Christ our Lord.

"MAYFAIR WELCOMES APOSTLE OF MORMONS"

(Concluded from page 807)

Many well-known theatrical friends were present, including: Miss Jane Carr and her fiance Major Fetherstonhaugh,

Miss Noni Wright, the young New Zealand actress,

Miss Edith Cracknell,

Mr. Robert Holmes, now playing in "Charles the King" at the Lyric in London.

Also many connected with the stage were present including:

Lady Alexander and Miss Lilian Baylis of the "Old Vic" and "Sadler's Wells."

Regrets were received from several prominent people, who were unable to attend, including:

The Countess of Oxford and Asquith,

Lord and Lady Lawrence,

Lord and Lady Trimlestown,

Emmeline Lady Sherston Baker of Dunstable,

Judge Edward and Mrs. Harrington, Mrs. Eaton Back: "Derek Vane,"

the well-known Authoress,

Miss Peggy Salaman, who, at the age of 20 flew from England to South Africa.

Other Church members, besides President and Sister Lyman, who were guests at the reception included President Joseph J. Cannon and Sister Cannon, President Andre K. Anastasion of London District, and Sister Anastasion, Sister Elizabeth Cannon, Amy Kathryn Lyman, and Elders Brigham S. Young, John W. Bond, Ralph W. Hardy, Parry D. Sorensen, Kenneth M. Williams, A. Z. Richards, Jr., Willard L. Fullmer, Stanley H. Heal, C. Van Noy Stewart, O. Meredith Wilson, Richard S. Tanner, Ormond S. Conlam, and E. Leon Mather.—PARRY D. SORENSEN.

WHY CHRISTMAS?

WHY do we send gifts to those we love at Christmas time? Why does Father Christmas come from the North laden with toys and gifts at this particular season?

Why do we decorate Christmas trees with gay, cheery colours and ornaments, and why sing Christmas carols and send Christmas cards?

Scholars have answers for all these questions. They tell us that Christmas came from Christ's mass, a church festival. But festivals were held at this season long before it was made sacred as the birthday of Jesus. December 25 was a festival day for the heathen Britons and ancient Romans, and was first observed by the Christian Church in the fourth century as the anniversary of the birth of Christ.

Christmas Eve is a perpetuation of the lighting of the Yule log, an ancient pagan custom in northern Europe.

Sending of gifts is traced back to the Yule gifts of northern Europe and ancient Rome.

Christmas trees were first lighted in Germany centuries ago.

Father Christmas is an ancestor of St. Nicholas of Germany and a modern "relative" of Knecht Ruprecht and Robin Goodfellow who anciently came from the far north with reindeer sledge, loaded with presents.

Christmas caroling is a custom which has descended from the "strolling street musicians" of England and from nativity days. Christmas cards are of modern origin, the first appearing in 1846.

LEG O' NOTHIN' WITH NO TURNIPS

(Concluded from page 806)

As they drove through Beaver Canyon, with a foot of newly-fallen snow on the ground, Hannah was suffering from an abscessed ear and a serious cough. Drearily she watched the snow gather into balls on the mules' hooves, increasing in size each step, until they rolled off and the process would begin again.

At St. George they had to lighten their load as the worst of their journey lay ahead of them. Hannah left her treasured set of dishes behind.

The Virgin River, winding in and out between two walls of hills, and dangerous with countless quicksands, had to be forded thirty-four times. The first time, as the mules splashed into the stream and the water ran into the wagon-box, Hannah barely succeeded in throttling her screams to gasps. When they reached the other shore, she sputtered, "John, I'd rather you would hang me than take me through that water again." Nevertheless she survived the succeeding thirty-three times.

AFTER a full month's journey they looked out upon the burnt desolation of their new home-site; a little group of adobe huts with willow and mud roofs, all messed together into a fort; pitiful attempts at wheat and corn fields; not a tree to protect one from the hot rays of the sun. The warm alkali water of the "Muddy" River had sickened Hannah from the first taste of it. Her mouth was raw with canker; yet she must continue to drink that water. She wondered if they would ever have anything to eat besides bread and treacle and parched corn or wheat.

Christmas was at hand, and when John asked Hannah what they would have for dinner on that festive occasion, she replied as she had done many times before, "Oh, leg o' nothin' with no turnips."

The day before the holiday, Hannah pnt down a new carpet (of straw), and while John was working on the stubborn land, drew out a bag of raisins she had purchased in St. George, the bit of flour she had saved, some bacon fat, and several days' output of their two hens. She concocted a Christmas pudding with these, and had it boiling in an iron pot when the mail carrier came to the door and presented her with some potatoes he had brought from St. Joseph, where they could be purchased at 30 shillings a hundred pounds. Then John came home unexpectedly with a wild goose in his arms which he had shot!

They celebrated Christmas Eve with a dance in the meeting house. People chaffed each other and laughed. Hannah suggested that they have a Venetian chandelier. They hung John's square lantern, an object of great curiosity, from the centre of the ceiling, with their round lanterns surrounding it. Two of nature's fiddlers played their repertoire of three tunes over and over again, while the company danced reels and quadrilles.

Next day Hannah invited the mail carrier and eleven guests to her Christmas dinner. It seemed almost as miraculous as the loaves and fishes, in its power to satisfy hungry people. A prayer of gratitude was offered to the Lord, and at the end of the day, singing was enjoyed. When Hannah sang, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet," with her flute-like voice, it seemed to the rest as though an angel were in their midst.

NEWS OF THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD

Re-establishment of the Japanese Mission, which has not operated since 1924, was announced Friday, November 27, by the First Presidency of the Church and the appointment of Elder Hilton A. Robertson of Springville, Utah, as the new mission president.

Headquarters of the mission will be in Honolulu, Hawaii, from which base the president and missionaries will work among the Japanese people in Hawaii and also supervise the establishment of branches in Japan. Previously the Church headquarters were in Japan where the mission

was opened in 1901 by President Heber J. Grant. Activity of organized branches of Japanese members, both in Hawaii and Japan have been directed for the past ten years by local officers.

Over an international network of United States and Canadian radio stations will go a special Christmas Choir festival in which 10,000 Church members will take part, it was announced by Elder Earl J. Glade, manager of Station KSL. The singers will be recruited from the membership of 150 wards in and around Salt Lake City.

IRISH DISTRICT CONFERENCE

THE first of the winter series of district conferences was held Sunday, December 13, when sessions of Irish District conference convened in the Arcade Buildings, Belfast.

District President Benjamin R. Birchall conducted the evening session of the conference, at which Presidents Richard R. Lyman and Joseph J. Cannon were principal speakers. Others who spoke at the session were Sister Amy Brown Lyman, Sister Ramona W. Cannon and Elder Dudley M. Leavitt. Music for all sessions of the conference was provided by the Millennial Chorus.

Relief Society work was featured at the afternoon meeting, conducted by Sister Mary Mogerley, district supervisor of the Relief Society.

Speakers included Sisters Lyman and Cannon, Lillian Ditty, Lena Horlacher, and Jean B. Cussans.

The morning session was conducted by Brother Joseph Ditty, second counsellor in the district presidency. Speakers were president Birchall, Supervising Elder Parley P. Giles and Elders Austin M. Scott, Joseph W. Darling, Norman E. Weston, and Eldon T. Lindsay.

Handsworth Branch Chapel, 23 Booth Street, Birmingham will be the scene of Birmingham District conference sessions to be held Sunday, December 20 at 11 a.m. and 2:30 and 6:30 p.m. President and Sister Lyman and President and Sister Cannon will be the principal speakers. Music will be furnished by the Millennial Chorus.

CHRISTMAS

By CHRISTIE LUND

CHRISTMAS! But not the Christmas it will be
 When the Christ-child's message shall be understood:
 When men shall walk uprightly and shall see
 The dawn of universal brotherhood.

Christmas! But not the Christmas of the dream
 He offered to the world—the dream of peace,
 Of fellowship—the star's white gleam
 Lighting men's souls to glory and release.

Christmas! Let every heart with pity break
 For our blindness, and let each knee bend
 In reverent prayer to ask for Christ's sweet sake
 That our wars, our hatreds and our greeds shall end.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD

Arrival and Assignment—Elder Franklin H. Hawkins arrived Thursday, December 10 from the Netherlands Mission and was appointed to labour in Hull District.

Appointment—Elder Adrian W. Cannon was appointed Corresponding Secretary of the British Mission Tuesday, December 8.

Doings in the Districts: Leeds—More than 200 attended a concert at St. Mary's Church, Halifax, given by the Halifax Latter-day Saints' Concert Party, directed by Sister Susie Manney, Y. W. M. I. A. president. The members of the party were entertained at supper by the Vicar following the programme.

Hull—Members of Hull Branch held a gift day and sale recently, with Elder Lewis W. Jones and Brother Miles Ramm acting as auctioneers. A social was held following the sale with Sister Amelia Ransom in charge.

A jumble sale was held Saturday, December 5 under the direction of Sister Marion Barrett, Sunday School Superintendent of Hull Branch.

Liverpool—Liverpool Branch conference, conducted by Branch Presi-

dent George Patey, was held in the Cooperative Hall, Kensington, Liverpool, on Sunday, November 22. District President Fred Bradbury and Supervising Elder David Y. Rogers were the principal speakers. On Sunday, November 29, the Relief Society, under the direction of President Marie Fyfe, sponsored a programme in Liverpool Branch, which included musical numbers and a short play.

Scottish—Supervising Elder Alexander McLachlan, Jr. and Elder Fred H. Thompson were principal speakers Wednesday, November 25, at the Partick Branch of the Toc H Club in Glasgow. Elder McLachlan related the story of the restoration of the Gospel and Elder Thompson spoke on Church organization. One Book of Mormon was sold after the meeting.

Birmingham—The value of home training furnished the theme of Northampton Branch conference conducted Sunday, December 6 in the Branch Chapel by Branch President William G. Bennett. Speakers were supervising Elder Karl F. Foster and Elder Arthur W. Jorgensen. A vocal solo was sung by Sister Beatrice Bennett and a recitation given by Master Lloyd Bennett.

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